DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 303 073 HE 022 093

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TITLE Graduates of Doctoral Programs in Higher Education: Demographics and Career Patterns. ASHE 1988 Annual Meeting Paper.
PUB DATE Nov 88
NOTE 36p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (St. Louis, MO, November 3-6, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Ladders; *College Administration; Demography; Doctoral Degrees; *Doctoral Programs; *Education Work Relationship; Employment Opportunities; Graduate Study; Higher Education; Labor Market; Longitudinal Studies; *Postsecondary Education as a Field of Study; Professional Education
IDENTIFIERS *ASHE Annual Meeting

ABSTRACT

A study conducted to examine the careers of higher education doctoral recipients ascertains their demographics and career patterns and discerns the existence of possible differences in career paths depending upon types of higher education programs (such as national, regional, research oriented, and locally oriented collections of courses). This follows a concern that if the market for graduates of higher education doctoral programs becomes saturated, prospective students may see little value in the degree for career advancement, and enrollments in higher education programs may dwindle. The population for the study was all graduates of doctoral programs in higher education in 1972, 1977, 1982, and 1987. Program directors for each of the chosen 130 programs were surveyed to gather demographic and descriptive information about their higher education programs. Results are discussed in terms of demographics, employment history, the perceived value of a higher education doctorate, and programmatic differences in career paths. Findings indicate the importance of carefully recruiting potential students who are not already in higher education positions since possession of the higher education degree alone does not seem to facilitate getting a position in academe. The importance of being honest about the degree's potential value for upward career moves in certain institutional types must be stressed, and individual higher education programs need to conduct ongoing self-evaluations. A substantial number of higher education doctoral recipients believe they made a poor choice in choosing higher education as a field of study. Contains 25 references and 14 tables. (SM)

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# GRADUATES OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: DEMOGRAPHICS AND CAREER PATTERNS

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**Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, St. Louis, Missouri, November 1988**

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri, November 3-6, 1988. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Since 1893, when G. Stanley Hall offered the first course of higher education at Clark University (Burnett, 1972), somewhere between 9,000 and 9,600 doctoral degrees in higher education have been awarded: 3,500 to 3,600 between 1893 and 1973 and 5,500 and 6,000 more between 1973 and 1986 (Crosson and Nelson, 1986; Dressel and Mayhew, 1974). Currently, enrollment patterns in higher education doctoral programs seem to be holding steady (Crosson and Nelson, 1986). However, some higher education scholars have voiced concern about potentially dwindling enrollment (Cooper, 1986; Grace and Fife, 1986; Williams, 1984). Others have been concerned about possible saturation of the market for program graduates. As far back as 1972, both Mayhew and Alciatore, in separate statements, observed that there was "the danger of overproducing graduates of higher education programs" (Alciatore, 1972). Crosson and Nelson reiterated this concern in 1986, asking, "Have higher education programs reached the point of overproduction of doctoral degrees?"

These concerns need to be addressed because of their possible effects on higher education programs. If the market for graduates of higher education programs has been saturated, prospective students may deem possession of the degree to be of little value for career advancement. Consequently, enrollments in higher education programs may dwindle and the usefulness or value of the programs may be called into question.

One way to determine the need for such programs is to evaluate the environment's response to the programs' product, their graduates. According to the "natural selection" view of

organizational adaptation, the "fittest species--those that evolve characteristics that are compatible with the environment--survive while other species becomes extinct" (Cameron, 1984). Implicit in this view is the need of organizations and programs within them to evaluate continuously the quality and fit of programmatic offerings with environmental needs. Conrad and Wilson (1985) suggest that such evaluation can ultimately raise questions of whether these programs should continue to exist.

If graduates are viewed as the primary "product" of higher education programs, enviromental response would be reflected in the career paths of the graduates. This focus on actual programmatic outcomes, i.e., career paths of graduates, can "help those responsible for a program to understand both its actual achievements and where action is needed to reconcile results with plans" (Conrad and Wilson, 1985). This kind of programmatic evaluation is vital since the organizational needs which originally prompted the creation of higher education doctoral programs may no longer exist or may be getting met in other ways.

Additionally, students' perception of the value of a higher education doctorate is most likely to be influenced by the degree's apparent impact on recipients' career opportunities. While the literature is replete with opinions regarding the demand for graduates of doctoral programs in higher education (Cooper, 1986; Grace and Fife, 1986; Moore and Sagaria, 1982; Williams, 1984), there has been little formal evaluation of the

impact of these programs on the professional lives of their graduates.

As one means of determining the worth of a higher education doctoral degree, a study was conducted to examine the careers of higher education doctoral recipients. Focusing on four cohort groups -- those who graduated in 1972, 1977, 1982, and 1987, the study surveyed a sample from each group to ascertain the demographics and career patterns of graduates of doctoral programs in higher education. Additionally, the study hoped to discern the existence of possible differences in career paths depending upon types of higher education programs as classified by Dressel and Mayhew (1974), i.e., national, research-oriented programs; regional, practitioner-oriented programs; and programs consisting of locally oriented collections of courses.

## METHODS AND DATA SOURCES

The population for the study was all graduates of higher education programs for the years 1972, 1977, 1982, and 1987. To ascertain who these individuals were, it was first necessary to determine existing higher education programs as of 1987.1

One hundred sixty-six possible doctoral programs in higher education were identified through a variety of sources: the Directory of ASHE Membership and Higher Education Program Faculty (1987), the ASHE mailing list of program directors (1987), Peterson's Annual Guide to Graduate Study (1987), the American

College Personnel Association Directory of Graduate Programs in College Student Personnel (Keim and Graham, 1987), the NASPA Forum (Regional elections held, 1988), and the Doctorate Records File of the National Research Council (1988). Preliminary telephone screening reduced the list of possible programs to 130.

During spring of 1988, a survey was sent to the program director or contact person for each of these 130 programs. A major purpose of the survey was to gather demographic and descriptive information about the higher education programs to determine their "fit" with the various programmatic models described by Dressel and Mayhew. Thus the survey was designed to elicit program characteristics in terms of the three higher education doctoral program types as suggested by Dressel and Mayhew. For example, Dressel and Mayhew suggested a series of program objectives for each program type or model. The survey used in this stage of the study included an alphabetical listing of all such objectives. Program directors were asked to select the five objectives most relevant to their program and then prioritize these five from most descriptive to least descriptive. In addition to gathering information about the programs, the survey also asked program directors to indicate their willingness to send names and addresses of those who had graduated in the years being addressed by this study. Followup through repeated mailings and telephone interviews yielded a 100 percent response rate.

Responses to the survey of higher education programs

indicated the existence of 88 programs self-identified as being "a course of study in higher education leading to a [doctoral] graduate degree." Fifty-two of the 88 programs or 59 percent indicated an initial willingness either to send alumni lists (50 programs) or mail the researchers' survey to their alumni ( two programs). However, only 36 programs or 41 percent actually did so.2 Some of the programs expressing an intitial willingness were unable to provide mailing lists of alums due to inadequate record keeping, institutional policies prohibiting the release of such information, or time constraints.

The alumni mailing lists made available by participating programs yielded a total of 1053 graduates for the four years being studied. Of this total, a stratified random sample of graduates from each of the four years being studied was selected: 114 graduates from 1972, 190 graduates from 1977, 218 from 1982, and 203 from 1987. Thus a total of 725 graduates was sent a survey designed to gather their employment history from the beginning of enrollment in the program up to the present, details about their doctoral education experience, and demographic information.3

While a response rate of 76 percent was achieved through repeated mailings, inaccurate mailing addresses had a significant impact on the response rate.4 Adjusting the sample size to compensate for the 110 undeliverable or unclaimed packets (15.2 percent of the original sample) yielded a 89.6 percent response rate for those whose addresses were known. Of the 539 usable

responses 84 were from the 1972 cohort (89.4 percent of the deliverable packets), 134 from 1977 (84.8 percent), 140 from 1982 (78.2 percent), and 181 from 1987 (93.3 percent).

## RESULTS

Acknowledging the risk of oversimplifying survey results, the authors have calculated only frequency distributions at this point in time. Thus survey results are descriptive and exploratory in nature.

Demographics. Examination of the demographics of graduates of higher education programs reveals a changing profile for recipients of higher education doctoral degrees. In 1972 the "typical" graduate in this study was male (86.9 percent), white (88.1 percent), and just over 36 years old at graduation. He preferred to seek the PhD (59.5 percent) to the EdD degree, and he was likely to complete his doctoral studies in three years or less (66.7 percent). In 1987 the "typical" graduate was female (58.6 percent), white (82.3 percent), and 43 years old at graduation. She had a slight preference for the EdD (53 percent), and it took her at least six years (71.8 percent) to complete her degree.

This changing profile of the doctoral recipient is not unique to higher education programs. Instead, it reflects several national trends among doctoral recipients. For example, the increase in the percentage of women receiving doctorates in

higher education (Table 1) parallels the national increase in the percentage of women receiving doctorates, particularly in the field of Education. Data from the National Research Council (1978, 1987) indicate that women earned 19.2 percent of the doctorates awarded in the years 1973-75, 25 percent in 1977, 32 percent in 1982 and 35.4 percent in 1986. While women are receiving a larger percentage of doctorates in all areas today than they were in the early 1970s, it is only in the field of Education (which includes Higher Education) that more women than men earned doctorates in 1986 (National Research Council, 1987).

The rate of minority recipients of doctorates in education is also increasing. National Research Council (NRC) data (1987) show that the percentage of minority groups receiving doctorates in education in 1986 was 17.5 percent, up from 11.8 percent in 1974. For higher education doctorates, this study suggests an increase of slightly over 7 percent for Blacks (from 4.8 percent in 1972 to 12.1 percent in 1987) and a slight increase in the number of Hispanics and Asians (Table 2). Overall the number of minorities receiving higher education doctorates has risen from just under 12 percent in 1972 to almost 18 percent in 1987.

While the racial/ethnic background of the average higher education doctoral recipient has not changed much over the past 16 years, the length of time to complete the degree has (Table 4). In 1972, almost 24 percent of the recipients completed their doctoral studies in two years or less and only 7.1 percent took seven or more years. In 1987 these percentages were almost

reversed: Only 6.1 percent completed their studies in two years while over 28 percent took seven or more years. This trend toward taking a longer time to complete the higher education degree is also evidenced for other fields of study. According to the NRC (1987), "the time it takes to earn a doctorate degree [has] steadily increased over the 15 period."

Since it is taking doctoral students in higher education longer to complete their studies, it is not surprising that the average age of doctoral recipients is also increasing (Table 3). Between 1972 and 1987, the average age of higher education doctoral graduates increased by almost seven years (from just over 36 to 43). In 1972 the average female higher education doctoral recipient was almost five years older than the average male recipient. In 1987 she was only three years older. This changing of the age difference between male and female doctoral recipients is also seen in other fields. NRC data (1988) indicate that the gap in median age between male and female doctoral recipients has closed from just under four years to less than half a year.

During the fifteen-year period covered by this study, no clear preference for the PhD or the EdD emerged among higher education program graduates (Table 5). Although there was an apparent preference in 1972 for the PhD, since that time the preference has been almost evenly divided. With the exception of 1982, men have shown a slight preference for the EdD and women for the PhD.

Employment history. Turning to the data on employment history of higher education doctoral recipients, we can make some generalizations about career patterns of these recipients. First of all, for the time period covered by this study, between 71 and 78 percent of the sample have spent their entire professional career, since receipt of the doctorate, in higher education, either as faculty or administrators (Table 6). Within this group, the bulk of the sample (41.5 percent) are currently middle managers, holding such positions as director of housing, admissions director, athletic director, director of counseling, and registrar (Table 10). Those who currently have faculty positions constitute the next largest group (almost 22 percent). Less than 12 percent of the graduates in the study hold senior-level administrative positions: Only 2.6 percent are chief executive officers, while 9.3 percent hold positions (such as dean of academic or student affairs) which report to the CEO. Over the fifteen years covered in this study, there has been little shift in the percentage of graduates who serve as faculty members or senior-level adminstrators upon receipt of the doctorate (Table 11). However, middle management administrative positions are serving as the first postdoctoral employment position for a smaller and smaller proportion of higher education doctoral recipients. In 1972 50 percent of the graduates were employed in middle management positions in colleges and universities after receipt of the doctorate. In 1987 this figure had declined to 37.6 percent. Although a smaller percentage of

higher education doctoral recipients are employed in these positions after completion of the doctorate, the proportion of those who are women is increasing (Table 12). In 1972 only 10.5 percent of those in middle management positions upon receipt of the higher education doctorate were women. In 1987 almost 60 percent in these positions were women.

While the percentage of graduates who have spent their entire postdoctoral career in higher education, whether in middle management, senior administration, or faculty positions, has remained fairly constant over the study's fifteen-year period, the percentage of graduates who have spent no time employed in higher education since receipt of the doctorate has steadily increased. Almost 5 percent of the 1972 graduates in the study have not been employed in higher education in any way since receiving their doctorate, while over 19 percent of the 1987 graduates have not been so employed. Obviously the 1987 figure may be so high because it reflects the most recent graduates, some of whom may simply not have found employment in higher education yet. However, the figure is suggestive because it seems to run counter to a common assumption that most students in higher education doctoral programs are already higher education faculty members or administrators who are getting the degree to become more eligible for promotion (Dill and Morrison, 1985; Dressel and Mayhew, 1974; Grace and Fife, 1986; Kellams, 1973). Also countering this assumption is this study's finding that a number of people possessing higher education degrees are in

education, but not in higher education. Of the 104 people in the study currently employed outside of higher education, 39 (37.5 percent) are employed as principals or teachers in the K-12 sector or as members of state agencies dealing with K-12 education. Also, thirty-eight people (36.5 percent) are in business related positions such as financial insurance or personnel administration.

While figures for those who have never worked in higher education since receipt of the doctorate account for some of the over 20 percent not currently employed in academe, they do not do so entirely. A number of respondents who are currently employed outside higher education used to work in academe (Table 8). Percentages for these respondents range from a low of 8.5 percent in the 1972 cohort group to a high of 15.4 percent for the 1982 group. Reasons for leaving academe vary (Table 9). The major reason given was time for a career change (45.4 percent). Other reasons included failure to find a job in academe (almost 31 percent) and better pay outside higher education (20 percent).

Perceived value of higher education doctorate. These reasons for leaving academe and the increasing percentage of graduates who have never held a position within academe since receipt of the doctorate may be related to one of the study's most troubling findings: the high percentage of degree recipients who would not pursue a higher education doctorate if they were beginning doctoral studies again (Table 13). Of the respondents who would pursue a doctorate again, slightly over half (56.9 percent) would

pursue a higher education doctorate if they were starting over. These responses range from a low of 47.7 percent for the 1977 cohort group to a high of 61.5 percent for the 1982 graduates. In each cohort group except 1972, the women are less satisfied than the men. The percentage of women who would select higher education as a field of study again ranges from a low of 44.4 percent in 1972 to a high of 59.6 percent in 1982 as compared to a low of 54.7 percent in 1972 and a high of 67.2 percent in 1987 for the men.

For those who would not pursue a higher education doctorate again, 185 indicated other fields of study they would consider. Business was the most preferred field (17.8 percent), followed by the social sciences (12.4 percent), nursing/medical sciences (9.7 percent) and law (4.9 percent). The percentage of those who would pursue degrees in nursing/medical science may partially reflect the recent development of the doctorate in nursing.

In spite of the dissatifaction indicated by the high percentage of those who would not pursue a higher education doctorate again, over 70 percent of the total respondents found their doctoral work to be "highly relevant" or "relevant" to their subsequent professional duties (Table 14). These responses ranged from a high of 76.1 percent in the 1977 cohort group to a low of 68.8 percent in the 1987 cohort group.

Programmatic differences in career paths. While the major purpose of this study was to determine demographics and career patterns of graduates of higher education programs, a related

purpose was to discern possible differences in career paths depending upon types of higher education programs as classified by Dressel and Mayhew. Data analysis of responses to the survey of program directors indicated that none of the existing programs fits cleanly into one of the three types proposed by Dressel and Mayhew. In fact, almost all of the programs appear to have a practitioner orientation. Specifically, almost 66 percent of the 70 program directors who responded to the question regarding program objectives indicated that the objective most descriptive of their program was "to train professional higher educations (administrators and service personnel)," an objective reflective of a practitioner-oriented program. Additionally, other practitioner-oriented objectives were the next most frequently selected program objectives.

Demographic data derived from this survey also support the conclusion that there is little distinction among many higher education programs today. Of the 69 public and 19 private programs, over 52 percent have two or fewer full-time faculty teaching higher education courses exclusively. In over 70 percent of the programs, 20 percent or less of the students complete their program on a full-time basis. Almost 90 percent of the programs have at least 50 percent of their students from the institution's home state with almost 66 percent of these claiming at least 75 percent of their students from the home state. All of these characteristics are ones typical of a regional, practitioner-oriented program.

In short, today's existing higher education programs tend to have characteristics of each of the three types or models delineated by Dressel and Mayhew with no one program showing a profile fitting cleanly into a single type. Rather, the data suggest that a new program type may be emerging, one which is deeply rooted in the concept of a regional, practitioner-oriented program but clearly includes elements of the other two program types.

This conclusion has bearing on the intended purpose of examining graduates' career paths in relation to the type of higher education program they attended. Since distinct program types could not be identified, it became impossible to examine career patterns according to the Dressel and Mayhew typology as had been originally planned.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study reflect the findings of preliminary analysis of the data. At this point no definitive conclusions will be offered, but implications useful for further analysis of this data or future research will be suggested.

Student demographics. The most striking demographic trend is the growing number of female graduates, a trend also noted by Gallagher and Hossler (1987) in their examination of enrollment trends in higher education programs. While the trend can be seen as part of a larger national trend of more women obtaining their

doctorates, particularly in education, it has implications for all graduates of higher education programs. Research on the graduation rates of men and women in other fields such as psychology indicates that when a field begins to be dominated by female graduates, the prestige of the field is lowered as are the salaries (The APA Monitor, 1987). While we may chafe against the injustice of this reaction to an increased number of female graduates in a particular field, we must be aware of the phenomenon and prepared to discuss it with current and prospective students of higher education programs.

The slight trend toward increased enrollment of Blacks in higher education programs is heartening when compared to the downward enrollment rates of Blacks in doctoral programs nationally. However, as we well know, colleges and universities are being urged to hire more Black faculty and administrators to serve as role models for current and prospective Black college students. We need to ask ourselves if we are doing enough to recruit and retain Black students in higher education programs. Recruiting and preparing minority professionals to serve in the college and university setting is one mission higher education doctoral programs could appropriately embrace.

Employment history. The data reported here do suggest an answer to Gallagher and Hossler's question, "Will the middle-management roles that many graduates of higher education fill become increasingly feminized in the coming years?" (1987). Not only is the trend for more higher education graduates to be

female than male, but of those graduates whose first postdoctoral position is in middle management, the trend is for more of these graduates to be women than men.

The results of this study also provide further evidence that upper-level management positions in higher education continue to held by men. Although more than half (58.6 percent) of the 1987 higher education doctoral recipients were female, the initial postdoctoral employment of only two of them (1.9 percent) was in upper-level higher education management. This is the lowest percentage for graduates in the four cohort years studied. In contrast, 12.1 percent of the men who graduated in 1987 were serving in upper-level higher education management positions after receipt of their doctorates.

The study also suggests that obtaining a doctorate in higher education is no guarantee for advancement to the senior administrative ranks. Only 12 percent of the 535 respondents currently hold a position which could be classified as senior-level administrative, while 41.5 pecent currently hold positions in middle management.

Perceived value of higher education doctorate. Student dissatisfaction with the higher education doctorate was evidenced by the high percentage of respondents who would not select higher education as their major field of study if they were to pursue a doctorate again. Eighty-three responses to an open ended question about the impact of higher education doctoral programs on one's career provided some indication why. The most common frustration

or complaint was the low status of higher education as a field of study, as indicated in the following comments:

> "My doctoral program prepared me extraordinarily well but few people in higher education today know or understand what the degree is or what is studied. Many believe it is without rigor or substance. This situation is very uncomfortable."

> "Higher education is often perceived as inferior to 'real' academic, content-based PhDs. For those not interested in 'quick and dirty' climbing, this degree is a potential liability."

> "For the type of institution to which I am committed professionally (selective, liberal arts, independent), a PhD in a traditional academic field is held in higher regard by faculty and board."

> "... in [a] recent job search, university administrators tended to 'put down' [the] PhD in Higher Ed. as valueless. [They] would not consider it as valid preparation for administrative position."

Occasional comments focused on the content of the higher education programs:

> "I would have gotten my degree in business or public policy if I had realized how narrow a higher education

program would be."

"Other fields of study [are] more challenging intellectually."

Some graduates expressed disappointment that the higher education doctorate has not provided the career boost they had expected:

"I am not unhappy with what I learned but I have not found it a particularly salable degree."

"[The] degree did not allow for advancement in academic administration."

"Persons studying higher education seem to return to jobs previously held, i.e., they don't achieve jobs <u>because</u> of the degree. They may be more secure in the job <u>because</u> of the degree."

Some of these student complaints and concerns are within the control of individual programs and higher education programs in general while others are not. Criticisms regarding the lack of intellectual rigor need to be addressed to specific programs. Criticisms regarding curricular narrowness may reflect the limitations of particular programs or may reflect curricular weaknesses within most higher education programs. Both the ASHE Curriculum Committee and researchers who are currently examining curricula of higher education programs as well as faculty members within these programs need to heed these criticisms.

Criticisms regarding the usefulness of the degree for career

advancement need further examination. Respondents to this study suggest that the degree's usefulness varies by institutional type, i.e., a doctorate in higher education may assist one's advancement in lower tier institutions but not Level I institutions. Future statistical analysis of this study's data may provide clarification of this issue. Additionally, it is a topic for future research.

The graduates' concern that is least within the control of those committed to higher education doctoral programs is the low status of education and thus higher education as a field of study. What we can do is make sure we do not mislead current and future higher education students about the perceived status of education as a field of higher education. We must acknowledge others' negative views of the field at the same time that we strive to make our programs intellectually rigorous and substantive.

Conducting research on higher education programs and graduates. While the primary focus of this study was to ascertain career development of graduates of higher education doctoral programs, both in general and in terms of types of programs as classified by Dressel and Mayhew, the study has also highlighted several conditions which serve as major stumbling blocks to research efforts of this type.

The first major stumbling block is the difficulty of obtaining an accurate listing of higher education doctoral programs. No single source such as the Directory of ASHE

Membership and Higher Education Program Faculty provides a definitive listing of these programs. For example, this study identified 19 programs not listed in the 1987 Directory. Also only 69 of the 93 listings in the 1987 Directory were actually higher education programs as defined in this study. Unfortunately, researchers studying issues related to higher education doctoral programs have used the various issues of the Directory as the primary source or definitive listing of these programs (Crosson and Nelson, 1986; Dill and Morrison, 1985; Gallagher and Hossler, 1987; Johnson, 1978; Nelson, 1987).

Another stumbling block to conducting research on higher education programs is the inaccuracy of the program listings in the various directories, including the ASHE one. In the ASHE directory, the contact person for 19 of the programs was erroneously listed. Although the reasons for these inaccuracies range from changes in leadership which occurred after the directory was printed to information which simply wasn't updated, the inaccuracies do cause problems in data collection. When sent to the wrong person, requests for data are often lost or ignored or inappropriately rerouted, all problems which affect the return rate of a survey.

A final problem which mitigates against systematic research on higher education program graduates or existing students is the failure of many programs to keep track of their graduates and students. Of the 52 programs which did not provide mailing lists of graduates for this study, 24 did not do so because they could

not. Program directors made such comments as, "Sorry, we have no way currently of separating our graduates from those of our larger department," or "I'd like to [participate], but we just don't have the time and addresses would not be accurate. We just don't have a tracking system." Even some program directors who provided mailing lists were unsure of what they were providing. For example, one director said, "We . . . [will] give what we have. It may not be up-to-date or accurate though." These program directors' comments describe a situation which must be corrected before systematic research on students and graduates of higher education programs will be feasible.

To Conclude: Prompted by concerns about market saturation and potential enrollment problems in higher education programs, this study was developed as an effort to evaluate these programs through assessing their impact upon graduates' careers and ascertaining graduates' attitudes toward their degrees. What has emerged from the study's data are some disquieting conclusions for those connected with and committed to higher education doctoral programs. First of all, we need to be careful about recruiting potential students who are not already in higher education positions since possession of the higher education degree alone does not seem to facilitate getting a position in academe. Next, we need to be honest about the degree's potential value for upward career moves in certain institutional types. While further research needs to be conducted on this topic, it seems likely that the degree is more useful for those seeking

career advancement in lower tier institutions than in those designated as Level I institutions, particularly for positions in academic administration. Also, obtainment of the degree may now be part of the credentialing crisis for many graduates. They have to obtain the doctorate simply to hold their current positions rather than to have a means for advancement. Such a situation may hold particularly true for female graduates. Perhaps most importantly, individual higher education programs need to be conducting ongoing program evaluations, of which an important part should be asking their own graduates about their satisfaction with the program and the impact possession of the degree has had on their career and professional development. This study indicates that a substantial number of higher education doctoral recipients believe they made a poor choice in choosing higher education as a field of study. The implications of such an attitude are dramatic, not only for future enrollment but also for higher education as a field of study. As one which is young and still seeking a legitimate place among graduate programs, the field of higher education will not find its quest for legitimacy facilitated by disgruntled or dissatified graduates.

## NOTES

1. A limitation of this study is its identification of programs which were in existence in 1987, thereby excluding graduates of programs no longer in existence in this year.

2. Of the 36 higher education programs which participated in the study of graduates, 29 were at public institutions and 7 in private. The programs were located in 22 states and in D.C. Every geographical region was represented with the exception of New England. Twenty-two of the programs had two or fewer full-time faculty, 12 had three to five full-time faculty, and two had six or more full-time faculty. For the cohort years being examined, nine of the participating institutions had between one and 10 graduates in total, 18 had between 11 and 25, four had between 26 and 50, four had between 51 and 100, and one program had over 101 graduates for the four years being studied. These figures can be compared to the estimates of 33 of the program directors regarding total number of graduates since the programs were established. Eleven of the programs have had 50 or fewer graduates total, 11 between 51 and 100, three between 101 and 200, five between 201 and 500, one between 501 and 1,000, and two over 1001 graduates since the program's establishment.

3. The student sample was selected as follows: 1) all of the 1972 graduates were included in the sample since there were fewer names available for this year than the other three years included in the study, 2) for the other three years, sample size for each program was set according to the number of graduates from that program in a given year, i.e., any program which had up to, and including 10 graduates in a given year would have all graduates for that year included in the study; any program which had between 11 and 20 graduates in a given year would have 10 randomly selected graduates from that year included in the study; any program which had between 21 and 100 graduates in a given year would have 50 percent of the graduates for that year randomly selected and included in the study; any program which had 101 or more graduates in a given year would have 50 randomly selected graduates from that year included in the study.

4. The response rate for the sample segment contacted directly by the two program directors was 81.8 percent (90 percent when adjusted for undeliverable packets) from one program and 71.1 percent (78.2 percent) from the other. Although the return rate for one of the programs is lower than the overall sample average, other programs had lower response rates. Therefore, the different method of contacting the participants from these two programs can reasonably be discounted as a limitation of the study.

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## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE 1

GENDER

| YEAR | N | MALE n | MALE % | FEMALE n | FEMALE % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 84 | 73 | 86.9 | 11 | 13.1 |
| 1977 | 134 | 97 | 72.4 | 37 | 27.6 |
| 1982 | 140 | 76 | 54.3 | 64 | 45.7 |
| 1987 | 181 | 75 | 41.4 | 106 | 58.6 |

TABLE 2

RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND

| YEAR | N | AM. IND. n | AM. IND. % | ASIAN n | ASIAN % | BLACK n | BLACK % | HISPANIC n | HISPANIC % | WHITE n | WHITE % | MIXED n | MIXED % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 84 | 3 | 3.6 | 2 | 2.4 | 4 | 4.8 | 0 | 0.0 | 74 | 88.1 | 1 | 1.2 |
| 1977 | 132 | 1 | 0.8 | 2 | 1.5 | 9 | 6.8 | 2 | 1.5 | 118 | 89.4 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 1982 | 139 | 2 | 1.4 | 4 | 2.9 | 14 | 10.1 | 2 | 1.4 | 115 | 82.7 | 2 | 1.4 |
| 1987 | 181 | 1 | 0.5 | 7 | 3.9 | 22 | 12.1 | 2 | 1.1 | 149 | 82.3 | 0 | 0.0 |

TABLE 3

AVERAGE AGE WHEN DOCTORATE COMPLETED

| YEAR | N | AVE. AGE | MALE N | MALE AVE. AGE | FEMALE N | FEMALE AVE. AGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 84 | 36.2 | 73 | 35.6 | 11 | 40.4 |
| 1977 | 129 | 39.9 | 95 | 39.1 | 34 | 42.0 |
| 1982 | 138 | 41.6 | 75 | 40.9 | 63 | 42.4 |
| 1987 | 180 | 43.0 | 75 | 41.2 | 105 | 44.2 |

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
(CONTINUED)

TABLE 4

YEARS TO COMPLETE DOCTORATE

| | | 2 OR LESS | | 3 YEARS | | 4 YEARS | | 5 YEARS | | 6 YEARS | | 7 OR MORE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | N | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1972 | 84 | 20 | 23.8 | 36 | 42.9 | 10 | 11.9 | 5 | 6.0 | 7 | 8.3 | 6 | 7.1 |
| 1977 | 132 | 12 | 9.1 | 64 | 48.5 | 26 | 19.7 | 16 | 12.1 | 6 | 4.5 | 8 | 6.1 |
| 1982 | 139 | 14 | 10.1 | 35 | 25.2 | 26 | 18.7 | 26 | 18.7 | 19 | 13.7 | 19 | 13.7 |
| 1987 | 181 | 11 | 6.1 | 31 | 17.1 | 38 | 21.0 | 27 | 14.9 | 23 | 12.7 | 51 | 28.2 |

TABLE 5

TYPE OF DEGREE

| | | ED.D. | | | | | | PH.D. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | MALE | | FEMALE | | TOTAL | | MALE | | FEMALE | | TOTAL | |
| YEAR | N | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1972 | 84 | 30 | 41.1 | 4 | 36.4 | 34 | 40.5 | 43 | 58.9 | 7 | 63.6 | 50 | 59.5 |
| 1977 | 132 | 52 | 54.2 | 19 | 52.8 | 71 | 53.8 | 44 | 45.8 | 17 | 47.2 | 61 | 46.2 |
| 1982 | 138 | 32 | 42.7 | 37 | 58.7 | 69 | 50.0 | 43 | 57.3 | 26 | 41.3 | 69 | 50.0 |
| 1987 | 181 | 43 | 57.3 | 53 | 50.0 | 96 | 53.0 | 32 | 42.7 | 53 | 50.0 | 85 | 47.0 |

TABLE 6

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION
SINCE COMPLETION OF DOCTORATE
(In terms of percent of time)

| | 100% IN H. E. | | | 50-99% IN H. E. | | | 1-49% IN H. E. | | | 0% IN H. E. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | %T | %M | %F | %T | %M | %F | %T | %M | %F | %T | %M | %F |
| 1972 | 77.4 | 76.7 | 81.8 | 13.1 | 15.0 | 0.0 | 4.8 | 2.8 | 18.2 | 4.8 | 5.5 | 0.0 |
| 1977 | 73.7 | 75.3 | 69.4 | 8.3 | 9.3 | 5.6 | 6.8 | 5.2 | 11.3 | 11.3 | 0.0 | 13.9 |
| 1982 | 71.9 | 68.4 | 76.2 | 5.7 | 6.5 | 4.8 | 7.2 | 9.2 | 4.8 | 15.1 | 15.8 | 14.3 |
| 1987 | 74.6 | 81.3 | 69.8 | 3.3 | 2.6 | 3.7 | 2.8 | 4.0 | 2.8 | 19.3 | 12.0 | 24.5 |

TABLE 7

RESPONDENTS NEVER EMPLOYED IN HIGHER EDUCATION

| | TOTAL | | | MALE | | | FEMALE | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | N | n | % | N | n | % | N | n | % |
| 1972 | 82 | 2 | 2.4 | 71 | 2 | 2.8 | 11 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 1977 | 132 | 8 | 6.1 | 96 | 4 | 4.2 | 36 | 4 | 11.1 |
| 1982 | 136 | 9 | 6.7 | 75 | 6 | 8.0 | 61 | 3 | 4.9 |
| 1987 | 175 | 18 | 10.3 | 74 | 3 | 4.0 | 101 | 15 | 14.8 |

TABLE 8

RESPONDENTS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED OUTSIDE HIGHER EDUCATION
BUT WORKED IN HIGHER EDUCATION AT ONE TIME

| | TOTAL | | | MALE | | | FEMALE | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | N | n | % | N | n | % | N | n | % |
| 1972 | 82 | 7 | 8.5 | 71 | 5 | 7.0 | 11 | 2 | 18.2 |
| 1977 | 132 | 18 | 13.6 | 96 | 13 | 13.5 | 36 | 5 | 13.9 |
| 1982 | 136 | 21 | 15.4 | 75 | 13 | 17.3 | 61 | 8 | 13.1 |
| 1987 | 175 | 16 | 9.1 | 74 | 7 | 9.5 | 101 | 9 | 8.9 |

TABLE 9

REASONS FOR LEAVING HIGHER EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT

| | | COULDN'T FIND JOB IN H. E. | | BETTER PAY OUTSIDE H. E. | | TIME FOR CAREER CHANGE | | OTHER | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | N | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 1972 | 6 | 1 | 16.7 | 1 | 16.7 | 3 | 50.0 | 1 | 16.7 |
| 1977 | 16 | 4 | 25.0 | 4 | 25.0 | 8 | 50.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 1982 | 20 | 6 | 30.0 | 4 | 20.0 | 10 | 50.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 1987 | 13 | 6 | 46.2 | 2 | 15.4 | 4 | 30.8 | 1 | 7.7 |
| | 55 | 17 | 30.9 | 11 | 20.0 | 25 | 45.4 | 2 | 3.6 |

TABLE 10

CURRENT POSITION
HEIRARCHICAL NOTATION

| | | CEO IN H. E. | | REPORTS TO CEO | | OTHER ADMIN. | | POSTSEC. FACULTY | | RETIRED | | OUTSIDE H. E. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | N* | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 1972 | 83 | 4 | 4.8 | 14 | 16.9 | 26 | 31.4 | 21 | 25.3 | 8 | 9.6 | 10 | 12.0 |
| 1977 | 134 | 3 | 2.2 | 12 | 9.0 | 52 | 38.8 | 30 | 22.4 | 10 | 7.5 | 25 | 18.6 |
| 1982 | 140 | 5 | 3.6 | 12 | 8.6 | 70 | 50.0 | 18 | 12.9 | 2 | 1.4 | 32 | 22.9 |
| 1987 | 178 | 2 | 1.1 | 12 | 6.7 | 74 | 41.6 | 48 | 27.0 | 2 | 1.1 | 37 | 20.8 |
| | 535 | 14 | 2.6 | 50 | 9.3 | 222 | 41.5 | 117 | 21.9 | 22 | 4.1 | 104 | 19.4 |

* A small number indicated that they were unemployed. For each cohort year, N = (sum of "n's") + (the number of unemployed respondents).

TABLE 11

FIRST POSTDOCTORAL POSITION

MALE

| YEAR | N | H. E. CEO n | H. E. CEO % | REPORTS TO CEO n | REPORTS TO CEO % | OTHER ADMIN. n | OTHER ADMIN. % | POSTSEC. FACULTY n | POSTSEC. FACULTY % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 66 | 2 | 3.0 | 8 | 12.1 | 34 | 51.5 | 17 | 25.8 |
| 1977 | 89 | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 5.6 | 42 | 47.2 | 26 | 29.2 |
| 1982 | 74 | 1 | 1.3 | 6 | 8.1 | 36 | 48.6 | 13 | 17.6 |
| 1987 | 74 | 1 | 1.3 | 8 | 10.8 | 27 | 36.5 | 20 | 27.0 |
| | 303 | 4 | 1.3 | 27 | 8.9 | 139 | 45.9 | 76 | 25.1 |

FEMALE

| YEAR | N | H. E. CEO n | H. E. CEO % | REPORTS TO CEO n | REPORTS TO CEO % | OTHER ADMIN. n | OTHER ADMIN. % | POSTSEC. FACULTY n | POSTSEC. FACULTY % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 10 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 10.0 | 4 | 40.0 | 4 | 40.0 |
| 1977 | 32 | 1 | 3.1 | 1 | 3.1 | 16 | 50.0 | 6 | 18.8 |
| 1982 | 64 | 0 | 0.0 | 3 | 4.7 | 22 | 45.3 | 22 | 34.4 |
| 1987 | 104 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 1.9 | 40 | 38.5 | 28 | 26.9 |
| | 210 | 1 | 0.5 | 7 | 3.3 | 82 | 39.0 | 60 | 28.6 |

TOTAL

| YEAR | N | H. E. CEO n | H. E. CEO % | REPORTS TO CEO n | REPORTS TO CEO % | OTHER ADMIN. n | OTHER ADMIN. % | POSTSEC. FACULTY n | POSTSEC. FACULTY % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 76 | 2 | 2.6 | 9 | 11.8 | 38 | 50.0 | 21 | 27.6 |
| 1977 | 121 | 1 | 0.8 | 6 | 5.0 | 58 | 47.9 | 32 | 26.4 |
| 1982 | 138 | 1 | 0.7 | 9 | 6.5 | 65 | 47.1 | 35 | 25.4 |
| 1987 | 178 | 1 | 0.6 | 10 | 5.6 | 67 | 37.6 | 48 | 27.0 |
| | 513 | 5 | 1.0 | 34 | 6.6 | 228 | 44.4 | 136 | 26.5 |

## EVALUATION OF VALUE OF HIGHER EDUCATION DOCTORATE

TABLE 13

SATISFACTION WITH HIGHER EDUCATION DOCTORATE
(Of those who would engage in doctoral studies if they were beginning again, the number which would pursue a doctorate in higher education.)

| | TOTAL | | | MEN | | | WOMEN | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | N | YES | % | N | YES | % | N | YES | % |
| 1972 | 73 | 39 | 53.4 | 64 | 35 | 54.7 | 9 | 4 | 44.4 |
| 1977 | 109 | 52 | 47.7 | 80 | 38 | 47.5 | 29 | 14 | 48.3 |
| 1982 | 130 | 80 | 61.5 | 73 | 46 | 63.0 | 57 | 34 | 59.6 |
| 1987 | 150 | 92 | 61.3 | 64 | 43 | 67.2 | 86 | 49 | 57.0 |
| | 462 | 263 | 56.9 | 281 | 162 | 57.6 | 181 | 101 | 55.8 |

TABLE 14

RELEVANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION DOCTORATE
TO SUBSEQUENT PROFESSIONAL DUTIES
(percent of those responding)

| YEAR | GENDER | HIGHLY RELEVANT | RELEVANT | SOMEWHAT RELEVANT | IRRELEVANT | UNCERTAIN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | MALE | 41.1 | 32.9 | 17.8 | 6.8 | 1.4 |
| | FEMALE | 30.0 | 40.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | TOTAL | 39.8 | 33.7 | 19.3 | 6.0 | 1.2 |
| 1977 | MALE | 38.5 | 37.5 | 18.8 | 0.0 | 5.2 |
| | FEMALE | 61.8 | 14.7 | 23.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | TOTAL | 44.6 | 31.5 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 3.8 |
| 1982 | MALE | 33.3 | 41.3 | 20.0 | 5.3 | 0.0 |
| | FEMALE | 27.9 | 37.7 | 24.6 | 6.6 | 3.3 |
| | TOTAL | 30.9 | 39.7 | 22.1 | 5.9 | 1.5 |
| 1987 | MALE | 46.7 | 24.0 | 21.3 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| | FEMALE | 34.3 | 33.3 | 23.8 | 4.8 | 3.8 |
| | TOTAL | 39.4 | 29.4 | 22.8 | 4.4 | 3.9 |